Multiple Species Conservation Program



WORKSHOP TOPICS

- North County Subarea Boundaries
- Existing MSCP as example
- North County Specific Issues
- Methods of Creating Maps
- Specific Features of Working Draft Map

MSCP SUBAREAS



NORTH COUNTY MSCP



EXISTING MSCP BACKGROUND

Adopted by Board of Supervisors in October, 1997.



Implementing Agreement entered into in March, 1998.









PURPOSE OF MSCP



The MSCP streamlines appropriate development while conserving lands

Goal is to gain "coverage" for species listed or likely to be listed





SAN DIEGO'S DIVERSITY



Fig. 2. Complementary set of counties that contains 50% of the listed species for each taxonomic group. The analysis identified two counties that contain large numbers of endangered species from three groups and nine counties that contain large numbers of species from two groups (Hawaii not to scale).

FEDERAL PROCESS WITHOUT MSCP

- HCP Permit Application
- USFWS and CDFG Review
- HCP Application Published in Federal Register
- Issue Section 10 Permit





COST & TIME SAVINGS

Without MSCP

Developers & local agencies bear all costs

Multiple permit authorities

Project by project negotiations

With MSCP

Cost sharing

County has permit authority

Pre-established requirements

Disruptions from future ESA listings

No disruptions from future ESA listings



BENEFITS TO HABITAT

Without MSCP

With MSCP

Piecemeal, isolated open space easements

Regional, inter-connected preserve system

Newly listed species are potentially not covered

Species not listed are conserved

Uncoordinated funding efforts for habitat conservation

Focus of Bond Act funding backed by 5-county group

Habitat management is inconsistent

Regional adaptive management programs



BIOLOGICAL MITIGATION ORDINANCE

Implemented by CEQA



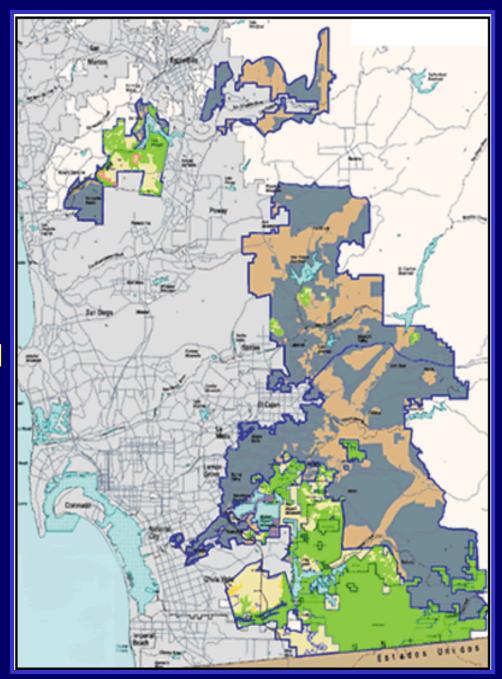
Replaces Bio section of RPO

Uses habitat-specific mitigation ratios

Incentives to mitigate in Preserve

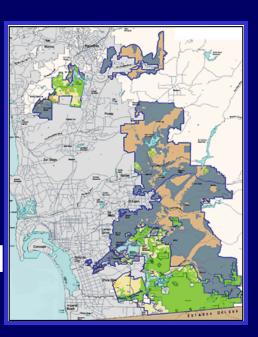
MSCP LEGEND

- Preserve
- Pre-Approved
 - Non Pre-Approved
 - Mostly Take-Authorized



Pre-Approved Mitigation Areas

- "Soft-Line" Areas
- All areas still subject to CEQA
- Development shall:
 - meet resource design standard
 - mitigate impacts
- Mitigation ratios set by Biological Mitigation Ordinance
 - Ratios favor preservation within PAMA



Acquisitions











ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESERVE

- County has committed funds to local obligation in annual budget.
- About 23,400 acres acquired by Federal,
 State, County and other groups in MSCP
- About 6,500 acres of mitigation from development projects
- Additional acres committed from proposed development projects

North County Subarea Issues





Vernal pools



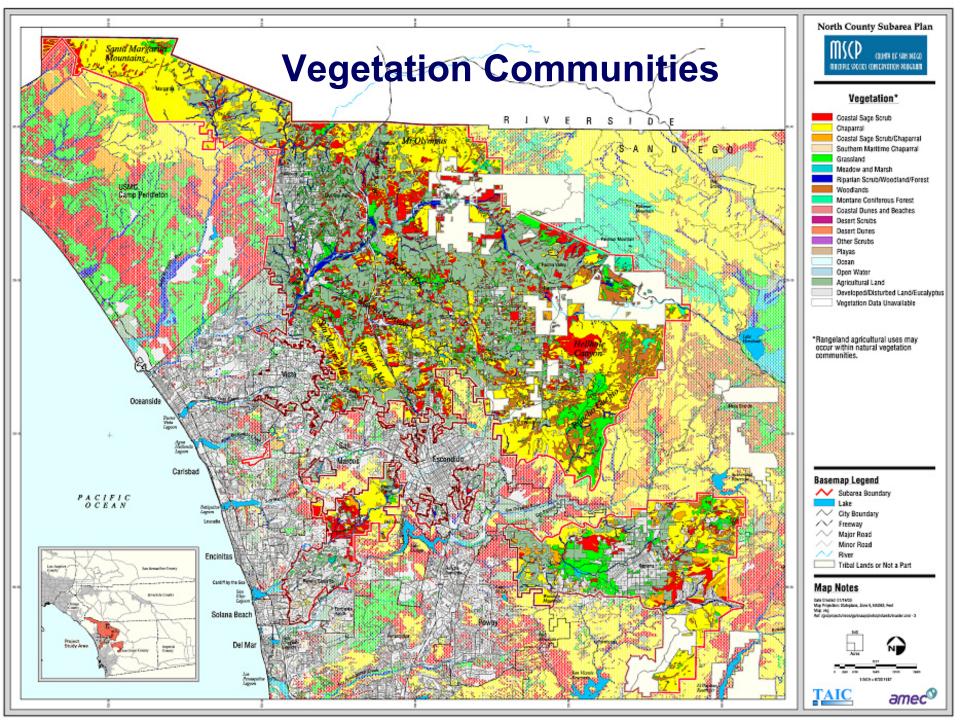
Highway 76

Agriculture/
Working Landscapes

North County Vegetation

- Coastal sage scrub
- Chaparral of various forms
- Grassland Native and Annual
- Riparian
- Oak woodlands
- Vernal Pools





North County Species





Stephen's kangaroo rat: Photo by Dr. Lloyd Glenn Ingles, California Academy of Sciences





Arroyo southwestern toad: USGS/photo by Chris Brown

Public/Private Partnerships

- Partnerships with stakeholders
- Emphasis on Agriculture Programs
- Special Area Management Plans





Coordination with GP 2020









Modeling

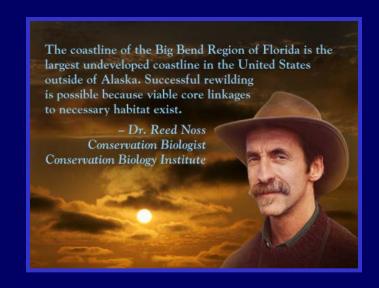
- Conservation planning depends on sound biological & modeling principles
- Relative habitat values need to assessed
- Many species considered together for coverage
- Lack of property access to perform surveys





Independent Science Advisors

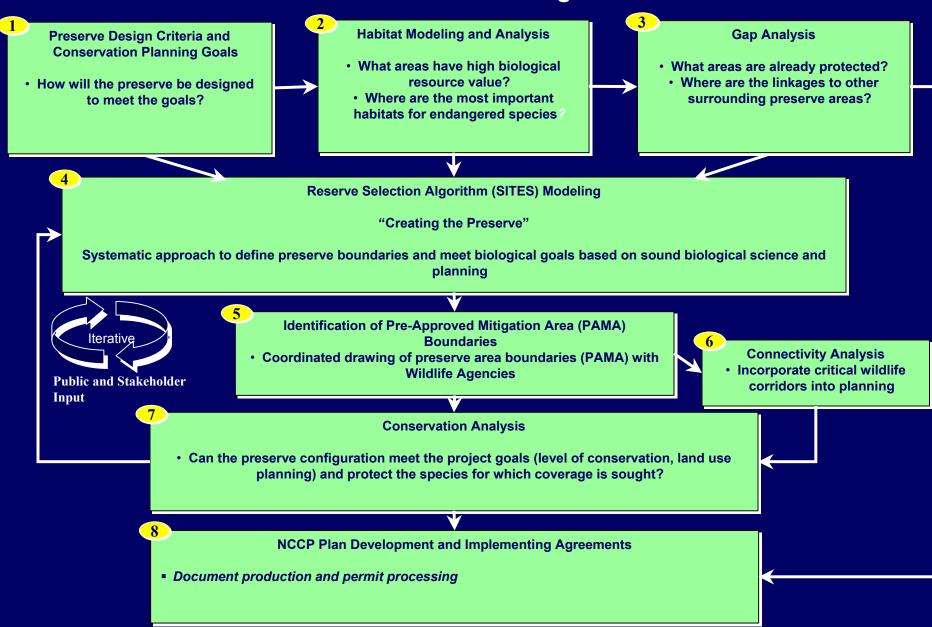
- Provide independent peer review to the process
- Aid in the identification of important biological areas







NCSAP Preserve Planning Process



Preserve Design Criteria and Conservation Planning Goals

- Basic framework for Preserve Planning:
 - Basic tenets of conservation planning
 - County deal points
 - Actions necessary to obtain coverage

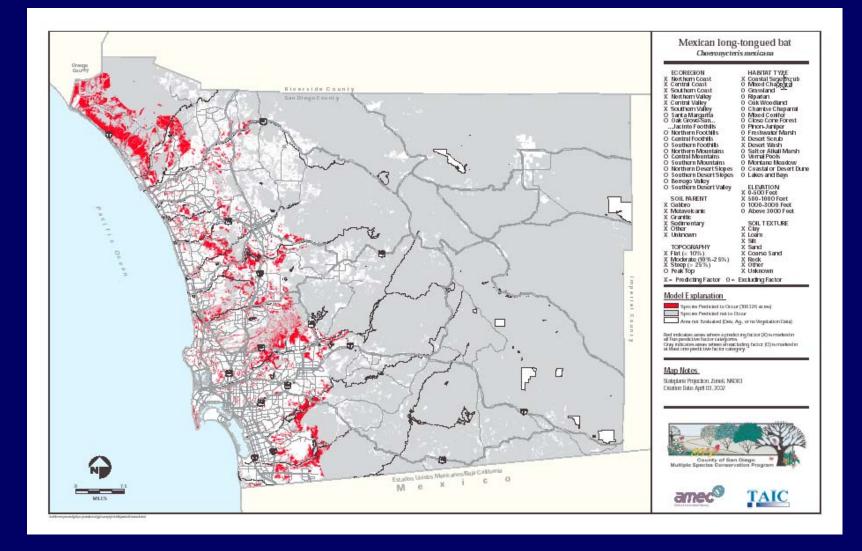
Habitat Modeling and Analysis

- It is not possible to field survey the entire study area therefore use modeling to evaluate the distribution of biological resources
- County Species Distribution Model
- Habitat Evaluation Model

County Species Distribution Model

- Identifies distribution of species based on wildlife habitat relationships
 - Vegetation,
 - Slope,
 - Elevation ranges,
 - Soils,
 - Ecoregion
- Over 400 species included in the model

Output of County Species Distribution Model

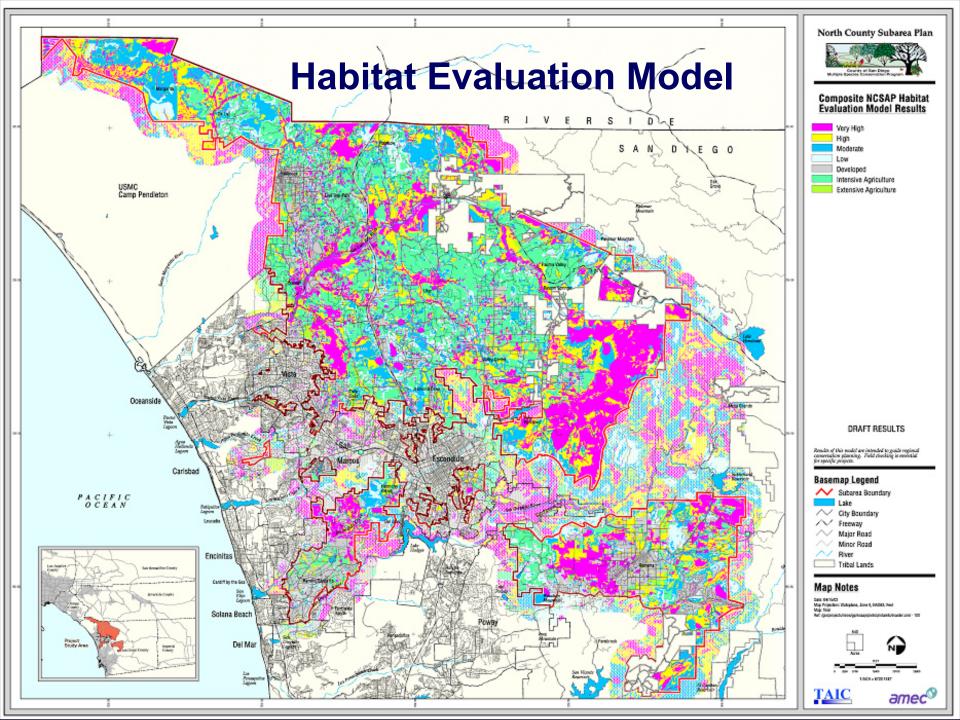


Habitat Evaluation Model (HEM)

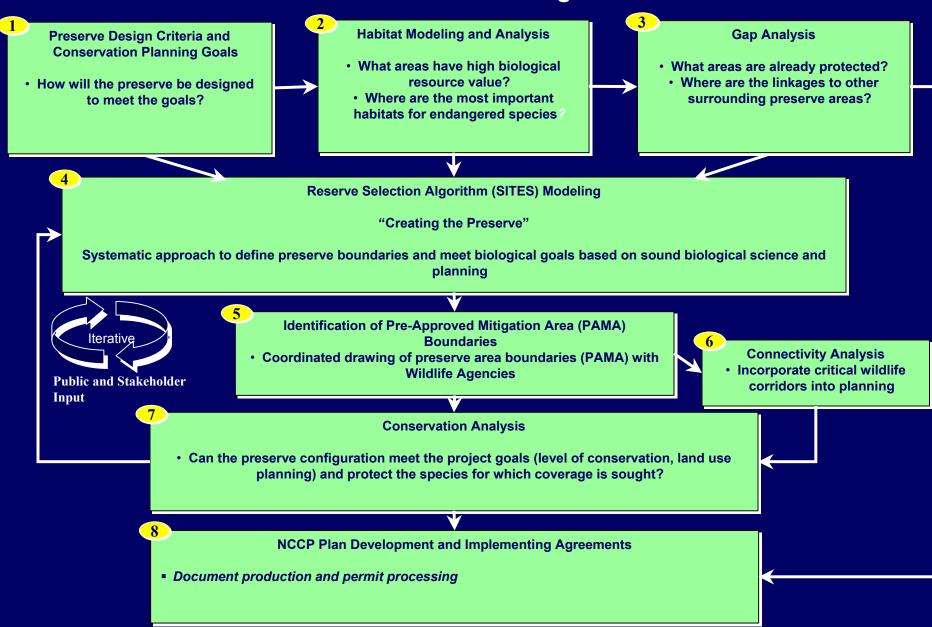
- Comprehensive model to rank overall biological value
- Used similar model developed for MSCP and tailored to North County study area
- Reviewed by Wildlife Agencies and Science Advisors

Habitat Evaluation Model Components

- Habitat Value Index general biology ranking
- Key Species Components (California Gnatcatcher, Stephens' Kangaroo Rat, Arroyo Toad)
- Grassland Component
- Vernal Pools and Target Species
 COMPOSITE RESULTS



NCSAP Preserve Planning Process



Gap Analysis

- Identify areas already protected
- Identify connections to surrounding habitat conservation plans
- Identify what areas are at "risk" from a biological perspective

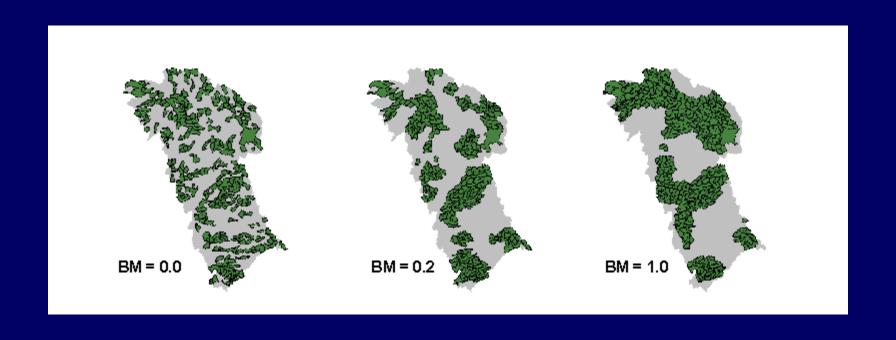
SITES Model

- Mechanically evaluate the trade-offs associated with drawing preserve area boundaries
- Optimum conservation area boundaries with the least acreage necessary to meet assigned goals
- Quantification of how many goals are reached
- Objective, repeatable

How is the SITES model controlled?

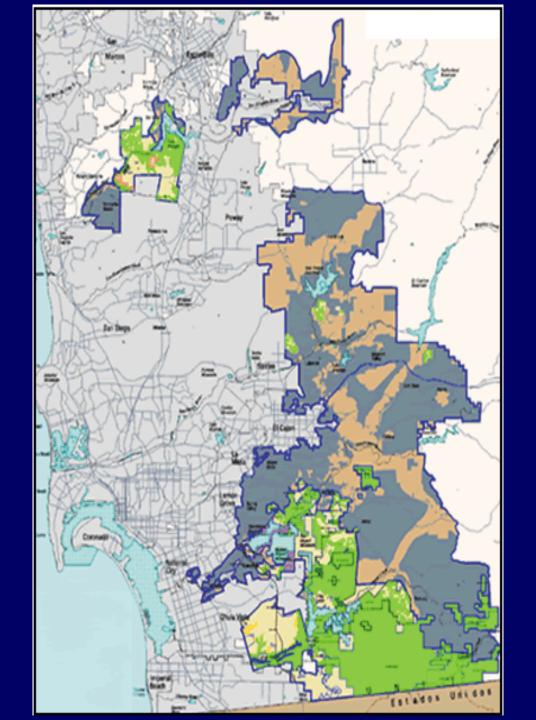
- Establish a set of goals for the model reach (i.e., 75% of Very High Gnatcatcher habitat)
- Define spatial/shape configuration parameters (boundary modifier, patch size, patch separation)
- Hard-coding of existing preserves and connections
- Optimization parameters

SITES EXAMPLE



Delineation of Pre-Approved Mitigation Area (PAMA) Boundaries

- Softline approach follows existing MSCP
- Coordinated with Wildlife Agencies
- Expert opinion
- Stakeholder and public input



Preserve Assembly within PAMA

- Incentive based mitigation ratios applied through Biological Mitigation Ordinance
- Mitigation Banks only with PAMAs
- Focus for acquisition strategies
- Conservation strategies for working landscapes

Connectivity Analysis

 Review wildlife corridor linkages relative to PAMA boundaries

Subarea Plan Working Draft



Areas within PAMA

- PAMA Upland Habitats
- PAMA Riparian/Wetland Conservation Areas
- Existing Agriculture Containing Habitat
 Value Important for Coverage
- Existing Agriculture

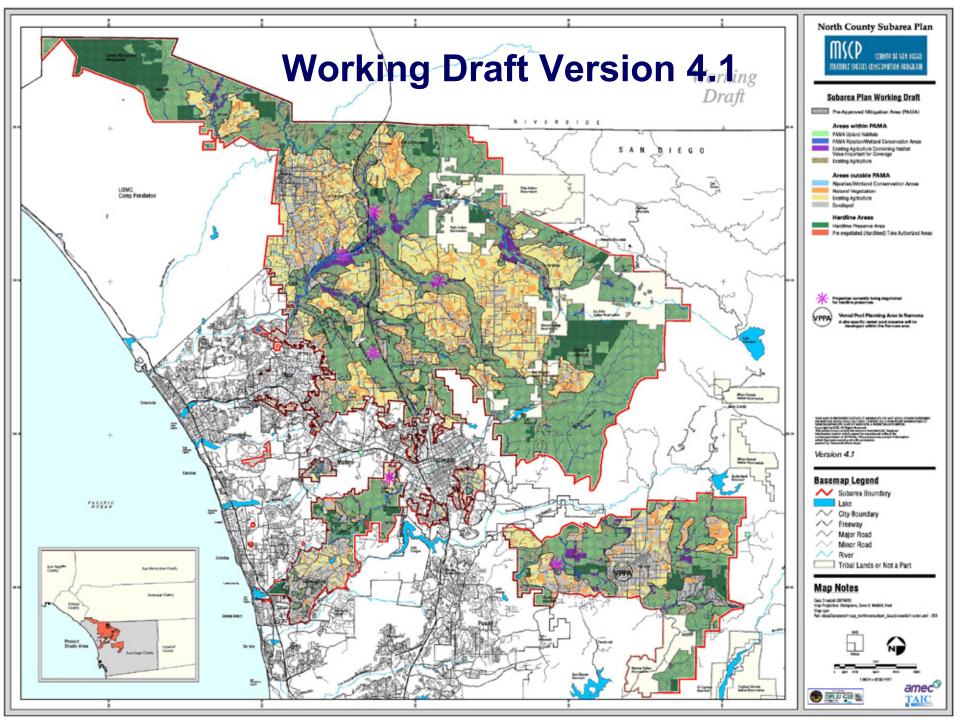
Areas outside PAMA

- Riparian/Wetland Conservation Areas
 - Natural Vegetation
 - **Existing Agriculture**
 - Developed

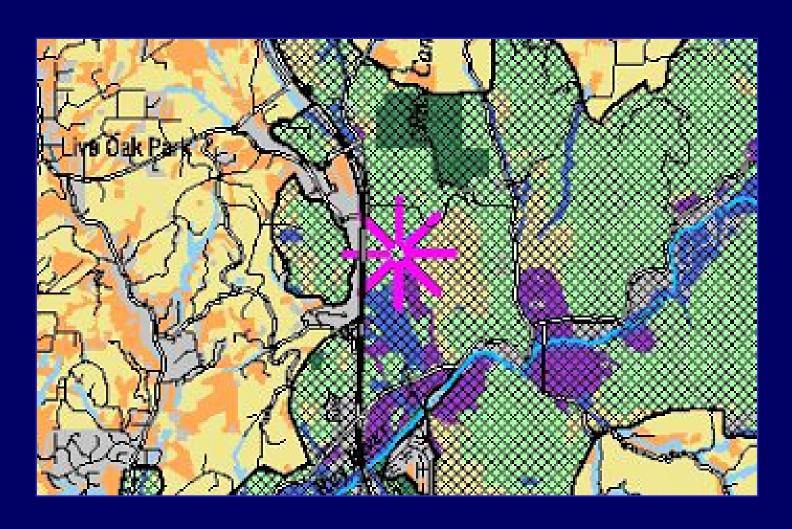
Hardline Areas

Hardline Preserve Area

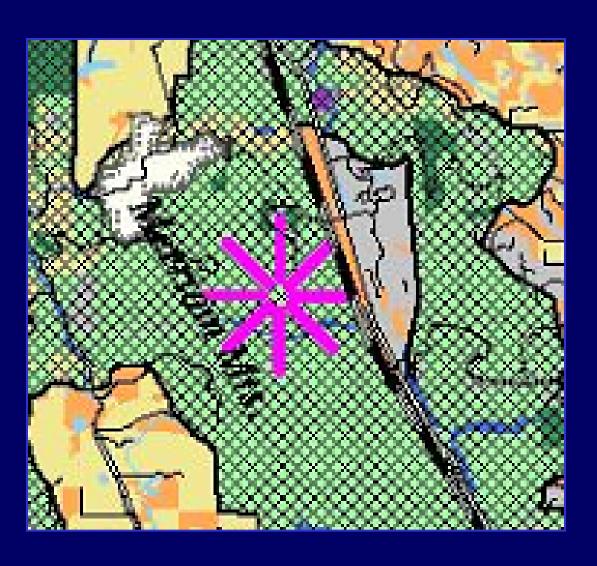
Pre-negotiated (Hardlined) Take Authorized Areas



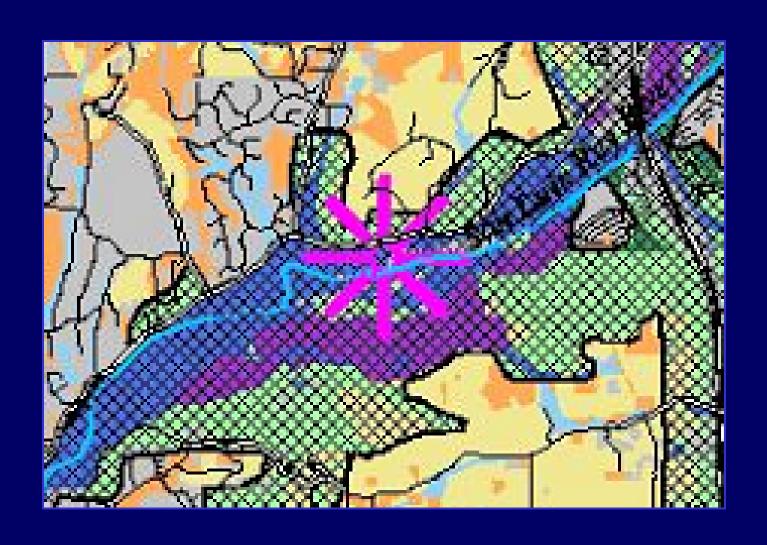
Pankey, Pappas & Pasarelle sites



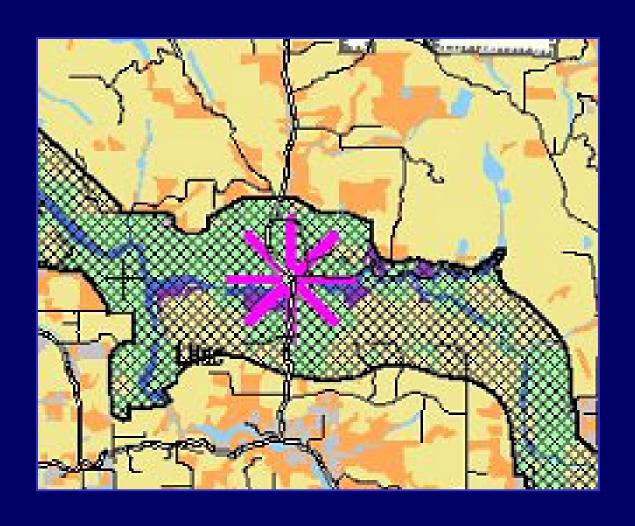
Stonegate/Merriam site



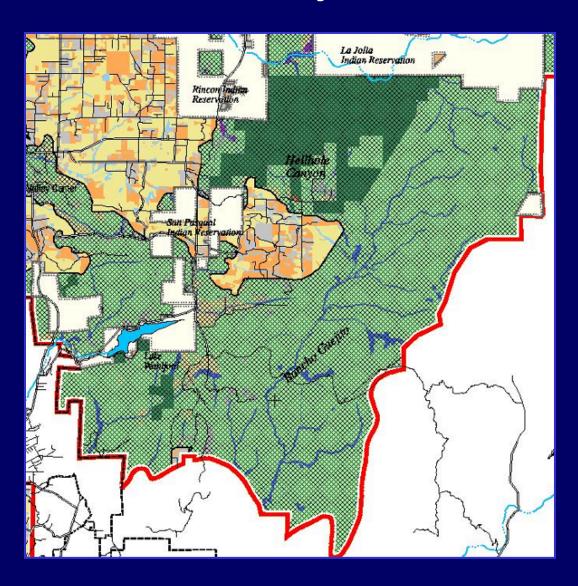
Highway 76



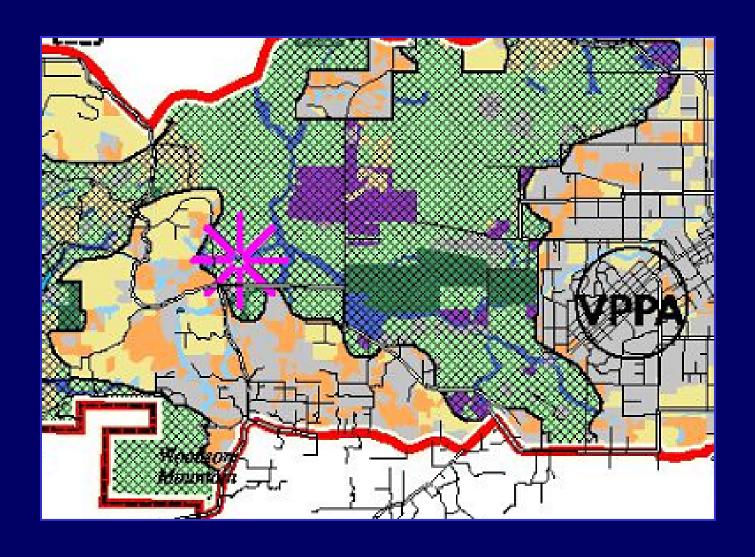
Rancho Lilac site



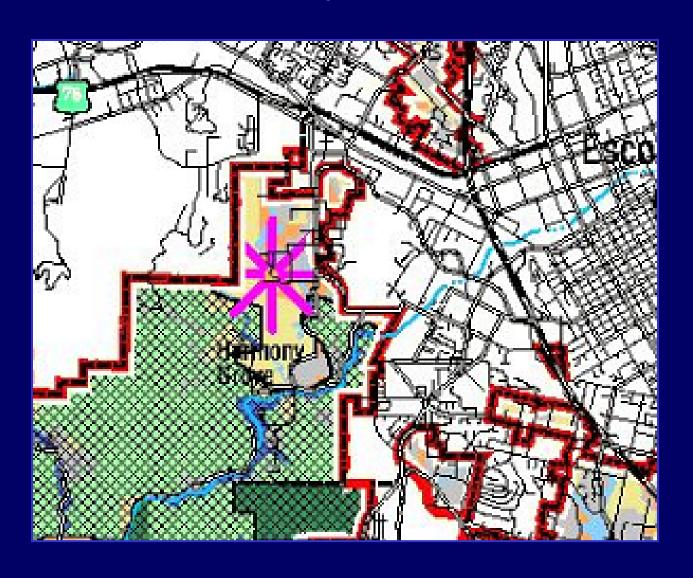
Rancho Guejito site



Ramona sites

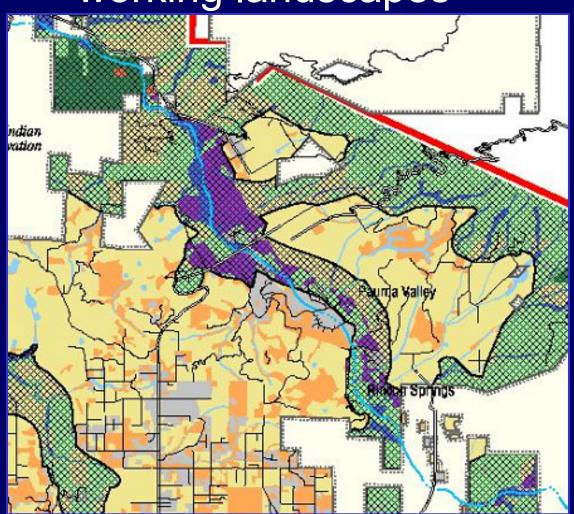


Harmony Grove site



Upper San Luis Rey River

working landscapes



Conservation Analysis

- Determine if PAMA meet species requirements to gain coverage
- Is there sufficient conservation for take permits?
- Species by species coverage analysis
- Public and stakeholder input
- Iterations

Management and Monitoring











Public Use of Preserve Lands









WORKING LANDSCAPES Draft Proposals

- Inside PAMA
- Outside PAMA
- Camp Pendleton activities
- Pursue incentive programs



Effects of Firestorm 2003

- Fire is natural and expected
- Fire management is an integral part of preserve management
- County is revising fire clearing regulations to improve public safety



Overall Concepts

- Map is Working Draft
- Wildlife Agencies must approve it for County to gain benefits of plan
- Issues are still evolving
 - Agricultural Concepts
 - Specific Project Proposals
 - SR 76 and San Luis Rey River Park
- Proposal integrates with GP 2020 drafts

Next Steps

- Accept Comments
- Map to be available on SANGIS web site
- Discussions with individual groups
- Coverage Assessment
- Environmental document

Contacts



County Website:

www.mscp-sandiego.org

Sangis Website:

www.sangis.org

E-mail:

mscp@sdcounty.ca.gov



Second Part of Presentation

- Step through NCSAP Preserve Planning Process Flow Diagram
- Present Maps of NCSAP Habitat Evaluation Model Results

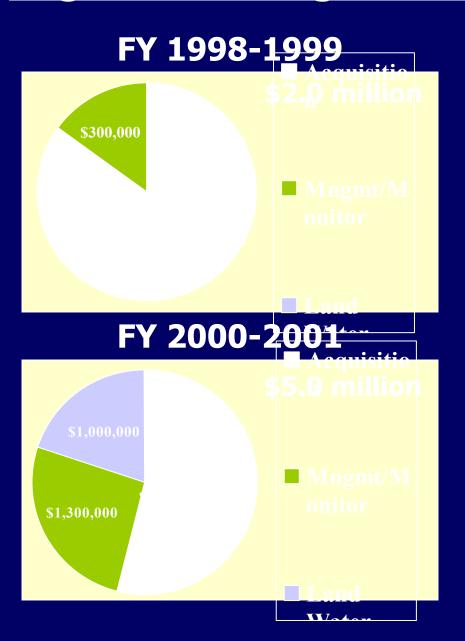
NCCP Plan Development and Implementing Agreement

- Narrow/Endemic policies
- Species-specific conservation actions
- Other land use policies (e.g. agricultural issues, infrastructure development)
- Habitat monitoring and management
- Special focus area conservation solutions (e.g. Ramona grasslands and vernal pools)

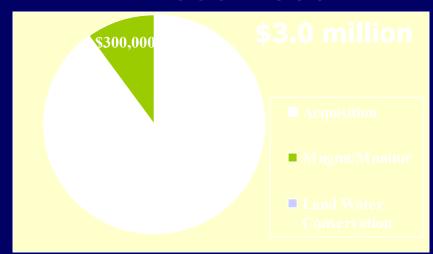
Next Steps

- Work with Agencies to finalize model products
- Present to public in workshops
- Evaluate Proposal for successful coverage of Species
- Prepare Draft Plan and present it for input
- Modify Biological Mitigation Ordinance
- Prepare EIR/EIS
- Take to hearing
- Obtain Permit from Wildlife Agencies

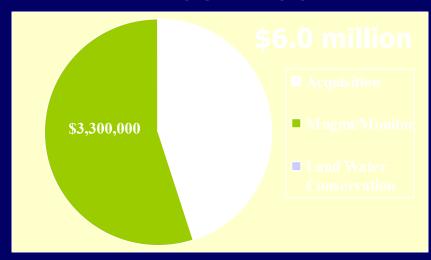
Regional Funding Sources: County Contribution



FY 1999-2000



FY 2001-2002





- Wilderness Gardens Park
- Hellhole Canyon Open Space Preserve
- "Hard lined"
- Count toward preservation credits
- Make up core biological areas
- Connections important (Parks, BLM, Cleveland)



Reservation Lands

North County Plan "stands alone"

- Have contacted Tribes to coordinate
- Limited response so far
- Discussions with Rincon Tribe about mitigation

Highway 76

- West of I-15
 - Widen SR 76
 - Create San Luis Rey River Park

Ramona Grasslands Project

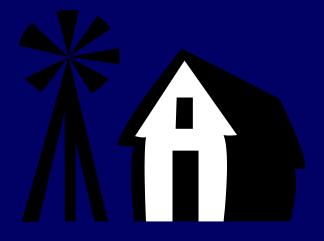


Ramona Vernal Pools Study



THE EXISTING PROBLEM...

- Vernal pools contain species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act
 - Unpermitted impact to species is unlawful
 - Conflicts with private land use







OUR PROPOSED SOLUTION...

- Develop strategy for addressing the vernal pool issue
 - Adequate protection for species
 - Prevent future listings
 - Assist Land Owners

VERNAL POOLS

- Unique plants & anin
 - Specially adapted specie
 - Fairy Shrimp
 - Downingia
 - Button Celery
 - Wetland animals
 - Birds
 - Tadpoles, Frogs, Salamand
 - Endangered species



WORKING LANDSCAPES Draft Proposals

- Inside PAMA
- Outside PAMA
- Camp Pendleton activities
- Pursue incentive programs



WORKING LANDSCAPES Proposal: Inside PAMA

- Existing agriculture would receive "coverage" for existing uses
- Expanding agriculture would mitigate as is currently required
- Small expansions may potentially be exempt from mitigation

WORKING LANDSCAPES Proposal: Outside PAMA

- Existing agriculture would receive coverage for existing uses
- Expanding agriculture: if place an agricultural conservation easement, waive requirements of Grading Ordinance



WORKING LANDSCAPES Camp Pendleton Activities

 Identify parcels for conservation to protect boundaries.

 Evaluate potential agricultural buffers for base.



WORKING LANDSCAPES Incentive Programs

- Agricultural operations within the PAMA are priority areas for in incentive programs such as:
 - Farm Bill programs
 - California Farmland Conservancy Program
 - Other programs providing incentives to landowners to improve habitat while maintaining agricultural operations

WORKING LANDSCAPES Safe Harbor vs. MSCP Coverage

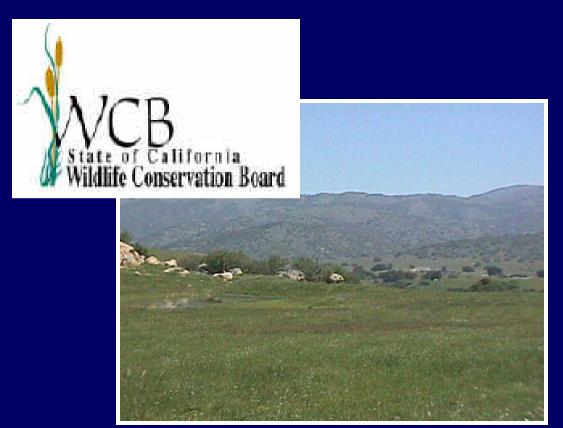
- Safe Harbor Agreements
 - Provide protection for individual properties against ESA issues.
 - Need on site surveys
 - Property Specific Agreement

MSCP

 Intended to provide coverage for areas with information from modeling and plan development

Property Owner Programs

- Wildlife Conservation Board Tax Incentive Program
- Board Policy I-123 "Conservation Agreements"
- Potential Safe Harbor Considerations





Working Landscapes

- Agricultural lands can provide habitat
- Best Management Practices
- Incentives to keep in agriculture

- Workshop last fall
- Public workshop January 2004
 - See MSCP website for more information

"No Surprises" Rule

- "No Surprises" Rule was not invalidated
- Permit Revocation Rule was invalidated
- The County may continue to rely on the No Surprises Assurances granted in its Implementing Agreement for the MSCP

